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FORM CD-260
REV. 6-86
DAO 202-335

Announcement Number: **PTO-06-063**
Issue Date: **03/14/06**
Closing Date: **11/21/06**

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

TITLE, SERIES, AND GRADE

Patent Examiner (Electrical & Computer Engineering, Computer Science)
GS-1224-11
Full Performance Level GS-13

***(Potential for GS-13 based on demonstrated performance)**

Multiple positions

Competitive Service

POPA bargaining unit position

NOTE: One or more positions may be filled using this announcement.

VACANCY LOCATION

Patent and Trademark Office
Technology Center 2100
Alexandria, VA

AREA OF CONSIDERATION

All Qualified Candidates
DOC Surplus, Displaced Employees in local commuting area

Amendment: Applicants who applied for PTO-06-007 need not reapply to be considered.

DUTIES: Reviewing patent applications to assess if they comply with the basic format, rules and legal requirements, determining the scope of the protection claimed by the inventor, researching relevant technologies to compare similar prior inventions with the invention claimed in the patent applications, and communicating the examiner's findings to patent practitioners/inventors with reasons on the patentability of applicant's inventions. Patent Examiners are responsible for the quality, productivity, and timely processing of patent applications, which is the basis of their performance evaluation. ***Note: The opportunity to obtain potential promotion to a GS-1224-13, Patent Examiner will be based upon demonstration of appropriate performance and acquisition of knowledge and skills, which will be demonstrated through a certification process.**

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

US CITIZENSHIP IS A REQUIREMENT FOR THIS POSITION

1-Year Probationary Period is a requirement of this position.

Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Computer Science positions require a four-year degree in a professional engineering curriculum from an accredited college or university. Qualification requirements in the vacancy announcement are based on OPM Qualifications Standards for General Schedule positions. For a detailed explanation of other ways to qualify refer to the Qualification Standards Statement attached to the end of the vacancy. It is also available for your review at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications>.

Specialized Experience: Experience that equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the duties of the position and that is typically in or related to the work of the position to be filled. To be creditable, specialized experience must have been equivalent to at least the next lower grade level in the normal line of progression for the occupation in the organization.

CTAP/ICTAP, well qualified means that the applicant is eligible, qualified, and clearly exceeds qualification requirements for the position as demonstrated by either: (1) meeting selective and qualify ranking factors levels as specified by the agency; or (2) being rated above the minimally qualified under the agency's specific rating and ranking process. Candidates will be rated well qualified if they score 85 or above based on the responses to the occupational questions in the Patent Examiner Employment Application.

EVALUATION OF QUALIFIED CANDIDATES: Each candidate will be evaluated on the basis of education, experience, training, and communication skills.

HOW TO APPLY – All applicants are to apply using our on-line Patent Examiner Employment Application at: www.uspto.gov. FIRST TIME VISITORS CLICK ON USPTO JOB OPPORTUNITIES; SELECT APPLY ON-LINE PATENT EXAMINER JOB APPLICATION. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET, PLEASE CALL 1-800-786-9757 BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:30 AM AND 5:00 PM TO REQUEST A COPY OF THE PATENT EXAMINER EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION.

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FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION CALL: Karen Jackson -(571) 272-6139 TDD# 1-800-828-1120 or Relay System

For more employment opportunities visit our web site at WWW.USPTO.GOV.

MAILING ADDRESS :

**US Patent and Trademark Office
Mail Stop 171 (JARS)
Office of Human Resources
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22314**

WHERE TO APPLY IN PERSON :

**US Patent and Trademark Office
Office of Human Resources
Elizabeth Townhouse
550 Elizabeth Lane Room 1A72
Alexandria, VA 22314**



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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

ALL QUALIFIED APPLICANTS WILL BE CONSIDERED REGARDLESS OF AGE, RACE COLOR, SEX, CREED, NATIONAL ORIGIN, LAWFUL POLITICAL AFFILIATION, NON-DISQUALIFYING HANDICAP, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AFFILIATION WITH AN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION, OR OTHER NON-MERIT FACTOR.

I. REGARDLESS OF WHICH APPLICATION FORM/FORMAT IS USED, APPLICANTS SHOULD ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:

1. **The announcement number, title and grade of the position for which you are applying.**
2. **Personal information**
 - a. Full name, mailing address (including ZIP Code), home and work telephone numbers (including area codes)
 - b. Social security number
 - c. Country of citizenship
 - d. Veteran's preference: If you wish to claim 5-point veterans preference or if you are applying under the Veterans Readjustment Appointment provisions, you must include dates of military service and a copy of each Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, DD-214. If you are claiming 10-point veterans preference, you must also include SF-15 and the appropriate proof required by that form.
 - e. Competitive status: if you are a current or former Federal employee, and if the announcement is open to status applicants only or if you wish to be considered as a status applicant, you must submit a copy of your SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, which shows you have status.
 - f. Veterans who are preference eligible or who have been separated from the armed forces with honorable conditions after 3 years or more of continuous active service may apply. (Under merit promotion procedures.)
 - g. Highest federal civilian grade held, including job series and dates held.
3. **Education**
 - a. High school - name, city, state and ZIP Code (if known) and date you received diploma or GED.
 - b. Colleges and universities - name, city, state and ZIP Code (if known), majors(s), type(s) of degree(s) received and date(s) received. If you did not receive a degree, show total credits earned and indicate whether semester or quarter hours. Submit copies of undergraduate and/or graduate transcripts if the announcement specifies minimum education requirements, if you are qualifying based on allowable substitution of education for experience or if you are qualifying based on Superior Academic Achievement (see the announcement for details).
4. **Job-Related Work Experience (Paid and Non paid)**
 - a. Job title (include series and grade if Federal)
 - b. Duties and accomplishments
 - c. Employer's name and address
 - d. Supervisor's name and telephone number
 - e. Starting and ending dates (month and year)
 - f. Hours per week,
 - g. Salary
 - h. Indicate if we may contact your current supervisor.
5. **Other Qualifications**
 - a. Job-related training courses (title and year)
 - b. Job-related skills (i.e., other languages, computer hardware/software, tools machinery, etc.)
 - c. Typing and/or stenography speed
 - d. Job-related certificates and licenses (current only). Do not send copies unless required in the announcement.
 - e. Job-related honors, awards and special accomplishments (i.e., publications, memberships in professional or honor societies, leadership activities, public speaking, performance awards, etc.) Give dates but do not send documents unless requested.

II. CTAP/ICTAP

1. CTAP candidates must apply for the vacancy, submit proof of eligibility for CTAP consideration, have a current performance rating of record of at least fully successful or the equivalent, and be within the Washington, D.C. Commuting area.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Applications mailed in Government franked envelopes will not be considered.
2. Applications submitted by telefax will not be considered.
3. Applications submitted by email will not be considered.
4. Applications submitted by mail with a postmark of on or before the closing date of this announcement will be considered only if received in the USPTO, Office of Human Resources, within five (5) working days of the closing date.
5. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements by the closing date of the vacancy announcement.
6. Applicants must be citizens of the United States (or owe allegiance to the United States).
7. Applicants with disabilities, disabled veterans, or any other applicants eligible for non-competitive appointment under special appointing authorities not requiring competitive status should clearly specify their special eligibility on their application.
8. If selected, male applicants born after December 31, 1959, must confirm their selective service registration status. Certification forms are available at most Federal agency personnel offices or from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.
9. Applications will not be returned to applicants.
10. Applicants will receive notification of the outcome of a vacancy announcement as soon as possible after a selection is made.
11. If a vacancy is for a supervisory or managerial position, the selectee may have to serve a supervisory/managerial probationary period.
12. If a vacant position is filled at a grade below the full performance level, the selectee may be promoted without further competition. However, this implies no promise or guarantee of promotion.

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13. Privacy Act requirements (PL 93-579): the application forms prescribed are used to determine qualification for promotion, reassignment, or employment and are authorized under Title 5, U.S.C. sections 3302 and 3360.
14. Candidates outside of the USPTO who are referred for consideration will be required to complete the Declaration for Federal Employment, OF-306.

The United States Patent and Trademark Office will provide reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If a reasonable accommodation is needed for any part of the application process, please notify the human resources representative identified under the 'How To Apply' section of this announcement. Decisions on reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

QUALIFICATION STANDARDS STATEMENT

PATENT EXAMINER GS-1224

ALL DISCIPLINES

DUTIES

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Completion of a four-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree or possession of a bachelor's degree in computer science or a related field of study. This course of study must have included 30 semester hours in a combination of mathematics, statistics and computer science, and at least 15 of the 30 hours in combination of statistics and mathematics that includes differential calculus.

ENGINEERING DISCIPLINES:

The Engineering Option covers the following occupations:

Aerospace Engineer Electronics Engineer

Agriculture Engineer General Engineer

Biochemical Engineer Industrial Engineer

Biomedical Engineer Materials Engineer

Chemical Engineer Mechanical Engineer

Ceramic Engineer Mining Engineer

Computer Engineer Nuclear Engineer

Civil Engineer Petroleum Engineer

Electrical Engineer

Basic Requirements:

A. Degree: Professional engineering. To be acceptable, the curriculum must: (1) be in a school of engineering with at least one curriculum accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) as a professional engineering curriculum; or (2) include differential calculus and courses (more advanced than first year physics and chemistry) in five of the following seven areas of engineering science or physics: 1) statics, dynamics; 2) strength of materials (stress-strain relationships); 3) fluid mechanics, hydraulics; 4) thermodynamics; 5) electrical fields and circuits; 6) nature and properties of materials (relating particle and aggregate structure to properties); 7) any other comparable area of fundamental engineering science or physics, such as optics, heat transfer, soil mechanics, or electronics.

OR

B. Combination of education and experience – college-level education, training, and/or technical experience that furnished (1) a thorough knowledge of the physical and mathematical sciences underlying professional engineering, and (2) a good understanding, both theoretical



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and practical, of the engineering sciences and techniques and their applications to one of the branches of engineering. The adequacy of such background must be demonstrated by one of the following:

1. **Professional registration** – Current registration as a professional engineer by any State, the District of Columbia, Guam, or Puerto Rico. Absent other means of qualifying under this standard, those applicants who achieved such registration by means other than written test (e.g., State grandfather or eminence provisions) are eligible only for positions that are within or closely related to the specialty field of their registration. For example, an applicant who attains registration through a State Board's eminence provision as a manufacturing engineer typically would be rated eligible only for manufacturing engineering positions.
2. **Written test** – Evidence of having successfully passed the Engineer-In-Training (EIT) examination, or the written test required for professional registration, which is administered by the Boards of Engineering Examiners in the various States, the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico.

Applicants who have passed the EIT examination and have completed all the requirements for either (a) a bachelor's degree in engineering technology (BET) from an accredited college or university that included 60 semester hours of courses in the physical, mathematical, and engineering sciences, or (b) a BET from a program accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) may be rated eligible for certain engineering positions at GS-5. Eligibility is limited to positions that are within or closely related to the specialty field of the engineering technology program. Applicants for positions that involve highly technical research, development, or similar functions requiring an advanced level of competence in basic science must meet the basic requirements in paragraph A.

Because of the diversity in kind and quality of BET programs, graduates of other BET programs are required to complete at least 1 year of additional education or highly technical work experience of such nature as to provide reasonable assurance of the possession of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for professional engineering competence. The adequacy of this background must be demonstrated by passing the EIT examination.

3. **Specified academic courses** – Successful completion of at least 60 semester hours of courses in the physical, mathematical, and engineering sciences and in engineering that included the courses specified in the basic requirements. The courses must be fully acceptable toward meeting the requirements of a professional engineering curriculum as described in paragraph A.
4. **Related curriculum** – Successful completion of a curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree in engineering technology or in an appropriate professional field, e.g., physics, chemistry, architecture, computer science, mathematics, hydrology, or geology, may be accepted in lieu of a degree in engineering, provided the applicant has had at least 1 year of professional engineering experience acquired under professional engineering supervision and guidance. Ordinarily there should be either an established plan of intensive training to develop professional engineering competence, or several years of prior professional engineering-type experience, e.g., in interdisciplinary positions. (The above examples of related curricula are not all-inclusive.)

Note: An applicant who meets the basic requirements as specified in A or B above may qualify for positions in any branch of engineering unless selective factors indicate otherwise, or unless he/she qualifies under the provisions of B.2 related to the EIT examination or BET degree.

Additional Experience and Training Provisions for Graduates of Professional Engineering Curricula:

- a. Superior academic achievement at the baccalaureate level in a professional engineering curriculum is qualifying for GS-7.
- b. Individuals can be converted noncompetitively to a GS-7 position if they complete all the requirements of a Federal baccalaureate level student-trainee program, including 1040 hours of work experience, 320 hours of which was at the GS-5 level.
- c. A combination of superior academic achievement and 1 year of appropriate professional experience is qualifying at GS-9.
- d. Applicants with an engineering degree who have appropriate experience as a technician equivalent to grade GS-5 or higher may have such experience credited for grade GS-7 only on a month-for-month basis up to a maximum of 12 months.
- e. Successful completion of a 5-year program of study of at least 160 semester hours leading to a bachelor's degree in engineering is qualifying at GS-7. Completion of such a program and 1 year of appropriate professional experience is qualifying at grade GS-9.



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Definition of Professional Engineering Experience: The professional engineering experience required for grades GS-7 and above is defined as nonroutine engineering work that required and was characterized by (1) professional knowledge of engineering; (2) professional ability to apply such knowledge to engineering problems; and (3) positive and continuing development of professional knowledge and ability. Professional knowledge of engineering is defined as the comprehensive, indepth knowledge of mathematical, physical, and engineering sciences applicable to a specialty field of engineering that characterizes a full 4-year professional engineering curriculum leading to a bachelor's degree, or the equivalent.

Professional ability to apply engineering knowledge is defined as the ability to (a) apply fundamental and diversified professional engineering concepts, theories, and practices to achieve engineering objectives with versatility, judgment, and perception; (b) adapt and apply methods and techniques of related scientific disciplines; and (c) organize, analyze, interpret, and evaluate scientific data in the solution of engineering problems.

Professional work in engineering, like that in other professions, is marked by continuing personal effort to keep abreast of the advancing and changing discipline. Continuing education in engineering and related fields is an important element of full professional competence as an engineer that should be considered in evaluating the qualifications of applicants for professional engineering positions.

In some situations, experience may be creditable even if it is not clearly professional engineering work. In such cases, the experience must have been preceded by prior responsible professional engineering experience and must contribute directly and significantly to the applicant's engineering competence. For example, an engineer might be assigned to a management-type position in preparation for assumption of higher-level responsibilities in engineering project or program management.

Graduate Education:

1. Individuals can be converted noncompetitively to a GS-9 position if they complete all the requirements of a Federal graduate-level student-trainee program, including completion of a master's degree in engineering and completion of 640 hours of work experience, 320 hours of which was at GS-7.
2. Regardless of the field of undergraduate study, completion of the requirements for a master's or higher degree in engineering is fully qualifying for the grade indicated, provided the applicant's total background, i.e., education and any experience, demonstrates evidence of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are substantially equivalent to those acquired through the successful completion of the courses specified in paragraph A.
3. With a bachelor's degree in engineering, graduate education in a related field is acceptable in lieu of graduate study in engineering for appropriate types of positions. For example, a B.S. in engineering plus a master's degree in business administration would be qualifying for Industrial Engineer, GS-9, but not for GS-9 laboratory positions in research and development. The key consideration in determining if such graduate education should be credited is whether or not the education provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the work of the position being filled.

Special Competence in Particular Areas of Engineering: Many engineering positions demand specific competence in a particular function or area. For such positions, agencies may use selective factors to identify those applicants whose records show evidence of the required capabilities. Such selective factors can be used for positions at all grade levels covered by this standard.

Engineering Registration: Registration as a professional engineer is an appropriate selective factor for appointment to certain, typically high-level, engineering positions. The key consideration is that registration must be *essential* for acceptable performance of the work of the position to be filled. Accordingly, it is an appropriate requirement for positions with duties and responsibilities that satisfy one of the following criteria:

- Responsibility for final approval of designs of major structures and facilities involving public safety where such compliance with State laws meets an essential need of the engineering organization to provide objective evidence to agency management and the public that the work is performed by engineers of proven competence.
- Responsibility for engineering determinations concerning contract awards or other major aspects of design and construction work to be performed by engineers in the private sector, where registration is essential to have their full confidence and respect to achieve cooperation on critical engineering issues.

When an engineering position has duties and responsibilities that would support a requirement for registration and a requirement is established, the position description should clearly document the basis for the requirement. It would be inappropriate to require that applicants be registered for positions with less responsibility than that indicated above, for positions that involve responsibilities and functions such as research and development, or for the sole purpose of improving the "image" of engineers in the Federal service. For those positions where registration is an



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appropriate requirement, such positions have been characteristically filled by registered professional engineers. If a currently filled position is newly identified as requiring a professional engineer, the requirement for registration should be waived for the duration of the employee's incumbency.

The Engineer-in-Training Test: The Engineer-in-Training (EIT) test is the first part of the professional registration examination for engineers in the various States. The EIT test is a test of engineering fundamentals generally taken by engineering school seniors or recent graduates. Those who pass are certified as Engineer-in-Training. The second part of the registration examination, covering practice in a branch of engineering, is taken after a specified period of experience required for registration as a professional engineer.

The EIT test is used under this standard to determine whether competitors without a degree in engineering or other qualifying education have a knowledge and understanding of mathematical, physical, and engineering sciences required to perform professional engineering work in a specialty field of engineering. This test is not to be considered as being in lieu of the requirement of at least 4 years of experience and/or education that might be regarded as providing such knowledge.

The EIT test is developed and administered by the State Board of Engineering Examiners in each State or comparable jurisdiction. The test is not administered by the U. S. Office of Personnel Management. Persons who desire to take the Engineer-in-Training test should direct their inquiries to the Secretaries of the appropriate State Boards.

College Teaching: College-level teaching of engineering may be considered as professional experience in engineering. In accepting and evaluating teaching experience, all specific qualification requirements pertaining to the evaluation of professional experience such as grade level, responsibility, scope, specialization, and knowledge required are also applicable to the evaluation of teaching experience. Teaching experience that is accompanied by a significant amount of research, direction of research, investigative, or similar work may be credited at full value in meeting a specific requirement for research, investigative, or similar experience.

Guide for the Evaluation of Engineering Curricula: The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (formerly the Engineers' Council for Professional Development) accredits specific engineering and engineering technology curricula; it does not accredit institutions. Thus, an accredited college may have (1) ABET-accredited professional engineering curricula; (2) professional engineering curricula that are not ABET-accredited; and (3) 4-year curricula in engineering technology that may or may not be ABET-accredited.

The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology publishes two bulletins: "Accredited Curricula Leading to First Degrees in Engineering" and "Accredited Curricula Leading to First Degrees in Engineering Technology." Those wishing to obtain copies of these bulletins should contact the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, 345 East 47th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017. A summary of ABET-accredited engineering programs also appears periodically in the *Journal of Engineering Education*.

Some engineering curricula are acceptable as meeting the basic requirements even though such curricula are not specifically accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology. As a general rule, any professional engineering curriculum in an engineering school that has one or more of its curricula accredited by ABET may be accepted. It should be noted, however, that some universities have curricula identified as engineering curricula outside the engineering school, e.g., in the school of architecture or forestry. Such curricula need to be reviewed to see if they comply with the requirements of paragraph A.(2) of the basic requirements.

Academic Qualification Requirements for GS-5:

Bachelor's degree and Superior Academic Achievement: a bachelor's degree in one of the fields described above and one of the following Superior Academic Achievement provisions:

Grade point average: Grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.66 out of a possible 4.0 for all courses completed during your entire undergraduate education or during the final 2 years of your undergraduate curriculum.

Honor Society Membership: Election to membership in one of the national scholastic honor societies (other than freshman honor societies) recognized by the Association of College Honor Societies.

Academic Qualification Requirements for GS-7:

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Bachelor's degree and Superior Academic Achievement: a bachelor's degree in one of the fields described above and one of the following Superior Academic Achievement provisions:

Rank - Rank in the upper one-third of your graduating class in the college or university, or major subdivision (e.g. School of Engineering) based on completed courses; OR

Grade point average: Grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 (2.95 or better) out of a possible 4.0 for all courses Completed during your entire undergraduate education or during the final 2 years of your undergraduate curriculum; OR a GPA of 3.5 out of a possible 4.0 for all courses completed in major field of study during the entire undergraduate education or the required courses in the major completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum; or

Honor Society Membership: Election to membership in one of the national scholastic honor societies (other than freshman honor societies) recognized by the Association of College Honor Societies.

Qualifying with Graduate Education

GS-7: In addition to meeting the basic qualification requirements for education, you must have at least one full year of graduate level education in biochemistry, biology chemistry, microbiology, computer science, material science, pharmacology, physics, polymer science, law, or one of the engineering fields.

GS-9: In addition to meeting the basic qualification requirements for education, you must have at least two years of Progressively higher graduate level education in biochemistry, chemistry, material science, pharmacology, physics, polymer science, or one of the engineering fields, or a master's degree or equivalent degree, or a Juris Doctorate or higher degree from a recognized law school.

GS-11: In addition to meeting the basic qualification requirements for education, you must have at least three full years of progressively higher-level graduate education in biochemistry, chemistry, material science, pharmacology, physics, and polymer science, or one of the engineering fields, or a Ph.D. or equivalent degree.

Note: Professional experience may be substituted for education

Updated: 12-12-00

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